

May 16, 1975

CLERK: LB 522 introduced by the Education Committee and signed by some of the members thereof. Read bill. Mr. President, there are committee amendments by Senator Frank Lewis' Education Committee and then there is a series of additional amendments. Senator Marvel asked to be excused Mr. President.

SENATOR LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, the committee amendments are very brief. It would limit the transportation issue to those students attending a nonprofit school, rather than a school for profit, in providing for transportation for them and I ask for the adoption of the committee amendment.

PRESIDENT: Is there further discussion on the motion? The question is the adoption of the committee amendments to 522. Record your vote. Record.

CLERK: 25 ayes, no nays.

PRESIDENT: The amendments are adopted. Senator Lewis.

SENATOR LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, LB 522 is an Education Committee bill. The bill is a very simple one. The bill provides that students attending a nonpublic school will be provided transportation as are other students in that particular district along the same route. Let me dispel the myth first that this is a church state issue. Let me tell you first that the Attorney General has said that is perfectly, in his judgement, a constitutional bill. It's a provision that can be used. The committee, and I speak for them as they put the bill out, addressed the issue as a transportation issue and not an education issue. The question before the body now is whether or not we wish to provide transportation on the same basis for all students regardless where they go to school. In my judgement, it has nothing to do with the church state issue that some try to make it as such. The issue here is, if a student is going to school, should transportation be provided for him. It's clear cut, it's simple, it's constitutional. Again, those that wish to make it something else and that, they're not. As I told the committee on my recommendation the bill was introduced and I take the blame or the credit for the same. It says that all children will be treated alike in regard to transportation. If you provide transportation in Bellevue, Nebraska for a child, if another child lived along the same route and he happens to be a nonpublic school student, he will be entitled to that transportation. It's that simple. The issue is clear cut. I offer this as a Protestant, a product of the public schools, the father of two children in the public schools, and I want you to understand that so that doesn't become the issue. I ask the adoption and the movement of the bill to Select File.

PRESIDENT: Senator Nichol.

SENATOR NICHOL: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, for the past few days I've deliberately tried not to say much,